



# Tommy Goes to School

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## US Virgin Islands Hotel & Tourism Association



Hello,

Welcome to the first issue of "Tommy Goes to School." We're going to have some fun talking about tourism and why people come to our beautiful islands. We will meet some interesting Virgin Islanders and take you on a journey through the history, culture, foods, games and other great things that make our islands unique and special.

I can't wait to join you in the classroom. Let's have fun learning!

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### The Mongoose

Mongoose were brought to the islands in 1882 to help get rid of rats in the sugarcane fields. Because the mongoose comes out during the day and rats run around at night, the whole plan backfired. You can still see the mongoose running across the road and trying to get in your trash.

What do you think tourism is? We see a lot of people on our islands everyday shopping, sightseeing in safari buses, enjoying our parks and beaches, and checking into hotels. Why did they come to our beautiful home? Many people work hard to get these visitors to our islands. Some of them work in the government or hotels, Others are travel agents, and travel writers. from off-island Magazines, newspapers, TV, radio, and now the internet help to encourage visitors to choose the Virgin Islands over the hundreds of other places to visit in the world. They come to get warm when it's winter time, to enjoy our history and culture, to have business meetings, to sample our

delicious food, to get married, and to fish and sail..

Without these visitors many of our family and friends would not have jobs. Who is responsible for making tourism work? All of us. Taxi drivers, housekeepers, front desk greeters, cooks, fishermen, waiters and waitresses, shopping attendants,, divers, boat captains and many others all help to make our tourism work.

What do you do when you see a tourist? Do you wave and say "welcome to my wonderful home and I hope you are enjoying your visit?" That would be the hospitable thing to do. Everyone would smile if you did that.

So tourism depends on our

making sure that our islands are beautiful, clean and safe and filled with interesting and fun activities for our visitors to enjoy; making sure that our visitors feel welcome; and ensuring that out people know how wonderful the Virgin Islands are so they will come for their vacations.

We want these visitors to go home and say great things about their trip so it is important that they have the best time EVER!



## How Many Virgin Islands?

The United States purchased the Virgin Islands in 1917 for \$25 million in gold and are a territory of the US. Before this happened, our islands were owned by the Danes, French, Dutch, English, Spanish and the Knights of

Malta The Virgin Islands are made up of more than 50 cays and islands. People only live on 4 of these islands—St. Croix, St. Thomas, St. John and Water Island. Our islands are a part of the northeastern West Indies and lie be-

tween the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. Each island has a different personality that makes it interesting to visitors. St. Croix is the only US Virgin island completely surrounded by the Caribbean Sea.

## It's Recess Time...Let's Fly a Kite

Let's talk about kites. Long ago, local kids made a small kite they called "a Spanish." It was made of paper, easy to assemble and didn't cost much money.

### Here's what you need:

Old newspaper

Paper bag

String for the tail—the tail should be at least 36 inches long

Thread for the loop

Lots and lots of string for flying high into the clouds



### How to Make a Spanish:

- 1) Cut a square piece of paper at least 8 inches X 8. inches.
- 2) Fold the square diagonally-corner to corner.
- 3) Fold in the tip of half of the paper to center fold and crease.
- 4) Fold in the tip of the other half to center, fold and crease.
- 5) Punch a tiny hole in each of the flaps. Pass a piece of thread through both holes and tie a knot. To the loop, attach the cord for flying.
- 6) For the tail, cut three slits on the back starting about 1/4 inch from the bottom. Attach the tail in the last one. You can decorate your kite anyway you want.

Happy Flying

## A person in time... Ariel Melchior Sr.—Born 1909



Tommy knew about Mr. Melchior. We see his creation every day. Men and women selling them on the corner for \$1.00, our parents always looking to it for information about

things that will affect their lives. We are

talking about the Daily News.

Mr. Melchior and his partner, teacher J. Antonio Jarvis, published the first edition of the Daily News on August 1, 1930, one of the first modern newspapers in the territory. They wanted to provide people with information about local politics and happenings and also provide themselves with an outlet for self-expression.

Melchior received many letters of commendation from national figures includ-

ing President Dwight Eisenhower and Vice President Hubert Humphrey.

Season after season we see the beautiful blooms of our red and yellow flamboyant trees (they produce our shak-shaks).

What does Mr. Melchior have to do with these flowering trees that bring color to our hills? In 1947, Melchior paid schoolchildren to gather seeds. A friend took him up in an airplane and he scattered them all over the island.

### WHAT'S AT THE BEACH...

(Circle the words to the right)

FQRELIFEGUARDMRTFCQII  
 LIEPMNBCKRIEKJYBVNQAI  
 MASLQURSTWEHCYTRQIIAI  
 BVNDHJYTZXIFLOATRWQAI  
 SQOYUJILJRSWRXXIUPLIWI  
 TERPTILNQNRRTASOTLLAAT  
 HLKQFARSTMNTYJREOILLT  
 LUEJURFTLQMDKIRBVDEM  
 PELITOSEAFANIBWQTUZITI  
 WISYCHTNVIMCBARIOQIRI  
 YRVCXWTYUCXTYURKLEI  
 FLIPFLOPSHGRHQURTEIEP



- FISH
- FLOATS
- SAND
- UMBRELLA
- REEF
- SNORKELER
- CORAL
- SEA FAN
- PALM TREE
- FLIPFLOPS
- LIFEGUARD

We have some of the most beautiful beaches in the world...Magens Bay, Trunk Bay, Sandy Point...In the puzzle, circle the things you'll find at the beach.



The bell has rung.

Tommy wants you to remember that succeeding in school and being respectful to our elders is important. **Don't forget:** Say hello to our visitors and "welcome to my beautiful home. I hope you treasure it as much as I do."

SEE YOU NEXT TIME.

**Tan-Tan** What is tan-tan? Wild Tamarind bush— Used locally for making charcoal, and living fence posts. The seeds are used to make jewelry. The bark and roots make home remedies. Goats love to eat it.